Pretty Little Lies

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Summary:

Richie Tozier is dependent; he relies completely on himself almost all of the time, and despite his own intense self-loathing and lack of parents who care, he's always held up a facade of being an obnoxious and stand-up kid.
Patrick Hockstetter is the complete opposite. He gets pleasure from other's pain, and has such narcissistic view of himself that he can only be described as solipsistic. He has a loving home who refuse the town rumors based on their son, and nobody has ever stood up to him.
After a fateful stumble upon a fight between Patrick and Henry, Richie saves Patrick's life and seems to breach his sense of self-identity being the only identity.

He finds himself falling for the idiotic boy in Coke-bottle glasses without warning, and before long he's falling faster than he can fly.

-In short, Patrick and Richie begin curing eachother of what ails them, and Patrick feels attachment and feelings for the first time.-

1. Riptide

Author's Note:

> This fic mainly contains aspects and the storyline from the movie, but has a few plot-points from the book in. They aren't a anything major, and I promise you'll be able to spot them as soon as they come into play.
> Enjoy!

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie stumbles into something he shouldn't have.

Richie grumbled to himself, wiping his brow with the back of his hand and pushing his glasses back up. The warm October sun beamed down on him, still keeping the promise of fall outside of its grasp.

Beverly and Bill walked beside him, going off about an Algebra teacher that the three shared. If he was being totally honest, he didn't really care for the class or their current conversation, and was only half-listening. His mind was just stuck on that one song that came on last night.....
"-I swear, his class is going to be the end- Richie?"

What was it called again? Richie dug through his thoughts, going over the lyrics he did remember. They seemed to escape him, making him sigh and clench his hand in silenced exasperation.

"Richie!?"

The two voices beside him calling his name out in unison finally

caught the boy's attention.
"Hmmm?" He asked, blinking as the sun momentarily blinded him. "What is it?"

Bill gave a slightly annoyed look, before replying. "Y-You've be-been spacing all day."

Bev agreed with a curt nod. "Yeah dude, do you even know what we're talking about?"

Richie blinked. "Something about Mr. Hoffman's class...?"

Bev rolled her eyes. "Yeah, yeah. And you've just been acting weird all day, what's up? You dying or something?"

It was a joke but Richie still scoffed, pretending to look upset. "I don't make mom jokes for one day and the world's suddenly ending? Gosh I didn't know you loved me so much Bev, but I've told you dear," He stopped, and pulled his Southern accent without warning. "....ya gotta take me out first, ya can't just butter me up hun."
Bill laughed at the antics, playfully shoving Richie, and Bev released a small giggle. "Make one more bad impression and I swear I'll get a divorce."
"GASP- my word! Threatening to turn down a brazzen hussy like me right away? Nonsense! Sorry I'm not as thick as Eddie's mom-"

Beverly cut him off with her sharp laughter, making Richie smile. She was probably one of his favorite people at this point, despite having only known her two or three months.
A quick glance at their other companion made Richie realize he wasn't the only one staring- Bill watched Bev laugh intensely, bright sunlight and something else making Bill's pale cheeks light up soft shades of red. If he didn't have on such an awed expression Richie would have made a comment on how creepy he currently looked.

"Heya B-B-Bill, looking a little red there."

At the mention of the teasing name, he looked away from Bev who

almost met his eyes.
Richie didn't blame him for staring- she was beautiful, breathtaking even. Her beautiful green eyes, red hair as fiery as her personality, and freckled pale skin was perfect; and her outgoing personality and sense of humor just added onto the mountain of perfection known as Beverly Marsh.
Richie thought- no knew she was one of the most attractive people in Derry, if not the most, but he didn't like her the way Bill did- with lingering gazes, a need to spend more time with her, and an all around strange atmosphere he let out when around her- something Richie couldn't understand and had never personally undergone.
Bill liked Bev, everybody knew, and even after hearing rumors before he met her Bill didn't stop. That's just the kind of person he was; he always say the good in things and payed attention to that.

"O-oh whatever R-Richie. You're practically sw-sweating like you've been-"

"Banging Eddie's mom?"

"Shut up."

Richie snickered. He was teasing Bill, but he still loved the way he flustered when he did. It gave the other boy a chance to hide his staring contest with Bev's face anyways.
"Whatever Big Bill, I put the 'ass' in 'smash' and you know it." Richie spanked his own rear to add emphasis.

Bev snorted. "Tsk, sure Trashmouth. You're about as thick as a stop sign and as curvy as a pencil."

"Well, your mom didn't seem to mind last night-"

Another sharp blow to his side.

And the rest of their walk went like that: Richie making some stupid joke and getting jabbed in return, Bev complaining about something or someone at school that all related to, Bill making comments on

stupid things Richie did that day, and so on.
Eventually as the coversating continued, Richie noticed it happen again- Bill would get flustered as him and Bev would start talking about something together and Richie would just be third-wheeling. After a few minutes he finally stopped.

"I don't mean to interrupt this lovely conversation on how disgusting school food is and why it needs to be outlawed, but I've got to split."

Bill glanced between Richie and Bev for a second before reacting. "W-why? Is something going o-on?"

Richie smiled. "Sadly yes. It's hot out here and I forgot I had a date with Stan's mom. If I show up this sweaty and musky she'll think I've been cheating on her with-"

Bill groaned. "Okay, okay, w-we get it." He came off slightly snappier than usual, but Richie pretended to ignore it as he continued.
"Well, I must be off. I wouldn't want to be late, now would I?"

Bev scoffed as he begin backing away from them.

"Pardon, madame Beverly, and sir Billiam, but I must cut off our humble chit-chat and tend to more pressing matters- I mustn't keep Miss Uris waiting now. I'm still on for tomorrow though, so see you then my good sirs!"

They both watched as Richie crossed the street and started off in a different direction, waving them a quick good-bye before scurrying away.

"He's so strange..." Bev muttered, and Bill silently agreed.

Richie was relieved as soon as he split off from his two friends. As

much as it surprised himself, he hated ruining these little moments between people.

In fact, he hated being the person in the middle of anything, whether it be two people unconsciously flirting or two people arguing, he hated it, and he was sure everybody else did too. This awkwardness started when he was younger, and would accompany his parents on trips, mostly because at the time they were somewhat more protecting, and cared enough not to leave a 7 year-old by himself. Maggie, his mother, and Wentworth, his father- would argue over something without failure, anything really. Whether it be running a red light, being out of cigarretes, or forgetting something at home, it never ceased. Richie would sit in the back, staring hard at the road ahead and trying to focus on the radio, or sounds of buildings going past them instead of his parents cussing and offensive slurs passed between them. Richie was glad they didn't take him out anymore.

Now whenever anything of the sort happened, he'd crack a bad joke or throw out one of his many Voices he'd earned over the years, and would lighten the mood even if he got an elbow to his ribs or slap to his face. Even that was better than any conflict or third-wheel situation in his eyes.

Richie walked down the street, turning at the corner. This morning he'd gotten a flat tire on his bike and had to walk to school, and coincidentally so had Bill, so they walked home with Beverly, who normally came on foot anyways. He liked talking to Beverly, she was a good listener and was the most honest person who knew, she never sugarcoated anything. This was both a blessing and a curse.
It was good most of the time, just not today. Today she noticed his lack of speech, which was 'rare for his motormouth' according to Eds. Today wasn't necessarily bad or anything, it was just off.

Last night his parents fought again. They fought most nights when they were home, so Richie ignored it until it got bad, worse than they usually got. His father was screaming about something- his mother getting drunk at a party and hurting something? Someone maybe?
It escalated to the sounds of glass shattering, which is when Richie

decided that it was too much and turned his radio on, blaring the music to mask the sounds of violence downstairs.
It worked, until a different song came on, something he'd never heard before. He frowned when he though that maybe his radio had paused, but when he leaned towards the device he heard it- the soft sound of a ukulele being strummed quietly.

Richie turned it up and plugged one ear with a finger, before he leaned back towards the radio to hopefully hear better. It worked, and before long Richie found himself in love with this new and strange song.

Often, I'm upset, that I cannot fall in love
but I guess this avoids the stress of falling out of it
Are you tired of me yet?
I'm a little sick right now, but I swear,
when I'm ready I will fly us out here

The rest of the song was just as enthralling, and he felt like the lyrics just made so much sense.
Before he could finish it, he fell off of his bed on accident, and managed to crash on the radio's cord. It unplugged, making Richie curse like a sailor at the pain of falling and sudden loss of music.
He jumped to his feet and tried finding the station again, but when he did another song was playing in its place.
Now he'd been thinking about it all day, and still was now.

Richie's eyes scanned the area he was in. He was in the forested part of town, near the Barrens and junkyard- perfect. Carefully, the lanky teen managed to hop the guardrail and scale his way down the steep hill accompanying it. He almost tripped, but made his way to the small stream there.

His gaze almost immediately fell on a small wooden-like structure obstructing the flow of water. It was a dam, perfectly made and working to the best of its extent. Someone must have noticed him and the other Loser's gross attempt at a dam, and decided to play along.
Still though, it was working in great condition, and Richie wondered who did it- it was definitely no one he knew- a mystery for later.
He stared at the current going over the small dam for a few minutes, studying the way the water trickled over it before he became bored. He could be home right now, but chances were the house would be empty, and even if it wasn't, his parents wouldn't notice him, or they'd be too drunk to even acknowledge his existence.

Everyone else was out doing something- Eddie being the only Catholic of the group was being prepared for All Saint's day, which was still two or three weeks away- Richie didn't get why he celebrated it, Eds hadn't attended church since he was 5, probably because his mother was convinced the holy water was dirty. (He was also secretly aware that Eddie probably wasn't even doing anything, his mother just made him make up an excuse to come over that day.)Stan had Bar Mitzvah practices, and Bill and Bev were going to study together. He was supposed to go as well, but he didn't feel up to it, no, not today. Anyways, he already knew about The Revolutionary War, why did he need to study it?

Richie soon found himself trailing the stream and letting his feet take him anywhere. The bright Autumn sun cut through the tall pines and other assortments of trees and foliage, and speckled sunset warmths across his skin. Despite already being late in the year, the weather hadn't shown any sign of the cold times approaching. This was Richie's favorite time of year besides summer. It was pleasantly warm, and the bright warm autumn colors and crisp smell in the air of stale petals and leaves falling was immensely satisfying. Richie would give everything for it to be like this forever- to be this age in this time- just not in this place.
He wandered away from the stream now, and made his way up and out of the woods. He was nearing the junkyard, right? If he hadn't notified before, the smell of rot and burnt plastic proved him right.

His nose crinkled at the disgusting smell and heaps of trash now in sight. He never came here unless he was with one of the Losers, and even they didn't really come. The junkyard was one of the Bower's Gang's spots, but they usually weren't around at this time.
Bev had once mentioned something about burning the mountains of waste down, to hopefully eradicate the stench, but Eddie freaked out and started off on bacteria being released into the air and smothering their town- Richie was sure she'd been joking, but it honestly wasn't a bad idea. Better than letting all of the town's garbage sit in the rot forever, he'd mused.
Richie prepared to turn and leave, but a sudden scream stopped him. It wasn't necessarily a scream- more of a startled gasp, but it still grabbed his attention. Somewhere towards the middle of the yard, shouts sounded out.

Richie couldn't help it, but he was curious. What was that thing that his mother used to say? Curiosity killed the cat?
He didn't really ponder that too long, while he made his way over. Quickly ducking behind one of the large trash-heaps, Rich peered over, taking in the scuffle unfolding before him.

Richie's heart immediately stopped in his chest.

There they were, Henry Bowers, and Patrick Hockstetter. Something was happening. Henry was standing, and gazing- no, glaring down at Patrick with all the anger of an agitated bear or lion- and Patrick was sitting on his rear, and was leaning back a bit, before looming forward. He must have fallen.

Patrick had on a shit-eating grin, and something in his eyes made Richie wince- he still made no effort to get up. His nose trickled dark red blood, and the side of his face was slightly reddened. He said something un-hearable from where Richie was hiding, and by the look on Henry's face, it was bad. Henry stepped forward and started shouting something at Patrick.

"-little pansy!"

What? Richie blinked a few times, feeling irritated at his lack of hearing then. He shouldn't have, but what he could he say? Curiosity killed him and before he knew it he was climbing farther onto the trash heap. He was closer now, and could make out various words and phrases passing between the two.
Patrick laughed at and said something else.

"-don't scare me- might not tell-"

Then Henry growled something clearly hearable.

"-I'll them about the refrigerator, your refrigerator! You know what they'll do with you Hockstetter?" The last part was spoken with so much disdain, it was evident in the air around them. "They'll fucking take you away and put you in the fucking looney-bin!"

Richie blinked and pushed his glasses up, stepping forward to hear better. The box he crouched on gave way slightly, making his leg slide out beneath him and forcing him to face plant in the trash in front of him. It made a soft crashing noise, but it was still loud enough to be heard.
Richie closed his mouth and swallowed hard, hoping-praying to whatever deity was real, that the two older teens a few feet away didn't hear him. If they did he might as well be dead. From the tone in Henry's voice and the way Patrick's face fell at the statement, this was vital, a dangerous situation.
Richie managed to pick himself up, and prepared to run away if needed be.

After a few moments, the shouts sounded out again, and he was momentarily relieved. Leaning back, Richie managed to grasp the last bits of the argument.
"if I see you around ever again, I swear to God I'll knock your fucking

block off, do you hear me!?"
"I hear you." Patrick's voice made Richie's stomach twist. His tone was soft and sad, nothing like him at all. This would have to be the first time Richie had even heard any of the Bower's sound this broken.

His face fit it too- Patrick was staring hard at the ground in front of him as Henry walked away, still seething with red-hot anger. Patrick's face wasn't saddened or even mad- he looked passive. He had on a straight face and his eyes seems to glare daggers at nothing.

Richie would have loved to watch Patrick stay contemplating there in the middle of the junkyard, but a low groan from the creaking wooden box below made him double back.
It finally gave out properly, and Richie couldn't hold back the scream that emptied itself from his throat as he tumbled back down the trash-pile and rolled onto the ground. He fell with a loud thump, and the wind was knocked out of him, making him choke on the lack of air.

His back was crowned with immediate soreness and Richie felt like he'd just run the mile at school. His head rolled into its side and then Richie knew that Patrick heard. Sea-green eyes met his dark brown eyes, and only a second passed before their was a reaction.

"Trashmouth!?"

Patrick's voice was empty and accusing, not sad or even angry right now.
Richie's breath returned, and in a second he struggled to his feet and ran. His glasses had slid off of his face, and even though he was blind without them, he kept running and didn't turn back. His thin legs carried his pale frame through all the blurriness, and despite the lashing branches that sliced and slapped against him as he darted through the woods, he never stopped.

"Richie, wait!"
His breath came in explosions and and his skin burned with a feeling unbeknownst to him at that moment. Fear maybe? He didn't know, but that saying about curiosity was now very fitting.

Richie felt like he'd been running forever before he finally stopped- scratch that. Before he fell.
In his lack of glasses, he'd managed to singlehandedly trip over the most obvious root, and land face-first in the stream. His torso managed to land across some wooden object- the dam- and crush it with the power in his fall. It splintered beneath him and small splits of wood dug into his belly. His face cracked onto a rock sticking up out of the water, and he cried out immediately. He forced himself up with his hands, and slowly managed to roll onto the shore. He looked up immediately in fright, but was met with the bad sight of the forest around him; no Patrick.

Hissing in intense pain, his blind eyes fell over the very broken dam- oh well. It was split almost in half, with one of its sides barely holding still in the quickening current, and the other leaning awkwardly towards the flow of water.

Richie felt his nose, relieved to find that it wasn't broken. Instead, warm liquid coated his face, but he couldn't tell if that was blood or some of the thick mud-sand from the shore. He hoped it was the latter.

After one more check, he noticed that his ankle had twisted and was extremely sore, along with his aching back. His stomach was painted red and even he could see in his poor eyesight that it was covered in gashes. His arms stung with small cuts from the branches that whipped past him from his running earlier, and his knees were turning a sickening purple in some areas. One of his wrists felt knobby and light, but that was probably nothing. Besides all of this, the back of his head seared with what he could only describe as a 'bright pain', and his eyes burned from his unsteady vision.

Richie eventually made it to his feet, and twisted the water out of his now heavy and muddy clothes. It had been at least 15 or 20 minutes since he'd first ran. Patrick was faster than Richie, and would have most definitely caught up at this point and probably beaten him to a pulp.

Richie tried climbing up the slope to the road, but couldn't. His bad eyesight failed him as he kept looking for footholds, only managing to slip and fall on his already sore back.
Finally, Richie gave in and started back, carefully following his trail of broken tree branches to the junkyard. If he wanted to get anywhere he'd need his glasses. He just hoped Patrick had given up and left already.

Richie made his way through the twisting woods, and started out once more.

Notes for the Chapter:

> Woah, okay, so here's Chapter One. It's not too great, mostly because I have little writing experience and because this chapter was originally going to be about 6,800 words, but it felt too long so I split it into two.
> Anyways, what would you guys prefer? One longer chapter ranging from 6,000-8,000 once a week, or two shorter chapters each ranging from 3,000-5,000 words once a week?
> Please leave a suggestion, and if you can, leave some kudos, bookmark this, share this around, whatever you can! (This may sound greedy, but more support usually means more effort, better chapters, I.e. !)

2. Asphyxiate

Notes for the Chapter:

> Here it is, Chapter 2!
> I got some suggestions from people here and an irl friend (if you're reading this I love you Jazzy!!) and decided it would be best to update once a week, with the chapter being 5,000 to 8,000 words.
> This chapter is a bit shorter, mostly because I want to update before the site temporarily closes, and because I was excited to start the next chapter.
> Anyways, I hope you guys enjoy!

Patrick could only stare as his eyes met Richie's. The loud crash of something stirring and then falling had signaled him to the smaller teen laying exasperated on the ground. Dust stirred in the air between them, and the temperature must have dropped because Patrick almost shivered.
Richie didn't even breathe when Patrick's cold gaze fell on him.

"Trashmouth!?" Patrick growled, face still remaining straight. His brows furrowed slightly when the realization of what he might of just witnessed crossed over. Richie grimaced when he saw Patrick's expression and he must of came to the same realization, because suddenly Richie had jumped to his feet and was stumbling away. He even forgot to get his glasses, which had slid off of his face in the fall.
Patrick remained for a few seconds, before he jumped to his own feet and gave chase to the smaller boy, who dashed away at a surprising speed.

"Richie, wait!" He internally frowned at the softness in his own voice, that wasn't right.

The implications of how screwed up this became hit him like a ton of bricks, and he would have chased down Richie if he hadn't realized what he needed to do. Him chasing the witness was useless. He could beat him to until he was half-dead and the fucker would still probably tell. Patrick would have to kill him, but the root of the problem would still be there.
Patrick didn't bother with the small shiver of excitement that etched up his spine when he thought of beating the helpless kid until he couldn't even breathe.
And if Richie did tell, he could deny it, but Henry would *definitely* know and would *definitely* reveal what he knew. How Henry found out was beyond him, and he grew irritated just thinking about it. Patrick had been so, so careful, it was almost painful. He always made sure no one was around when he went hunting for the animals, and always checked himself for evidence of anything, whether it be a stray hair or some blood stained on his shirt. He never pointed out to anyone that something special may lie there, and never mentioned or suggested anything involving the old fridges there in the junk yard.

No matter, Patrick was still convinced he'd tattle even if no one heard about what he'd just done with Henry. He knew what he needed to do now.

Destroy the refrigerator.

Patrick turned back towards the junkyard, and started back in the direction of the fridgerators. Someone, probably the man who owned to junkyard, had arranged all of the old machines people dumped there in a small corner tucked away from the rest of the trash. Everything from old stoves, to broken down heaters and air conditioners were stationed there, some being over 50 years old, others being maybe a month in.

The refridgerator- Patrick's refridgerator- was one of the Fridgidaire brands. The outside was stained a grey-white and was yellowing in some areas. Black smudges accompanied some areas of it, especially the handles, and it always had a musty, mildew like stench around it. It was disgusting, but a step better than the rest of everything there.

And besides, the smell was probably what had hid his secret so long; nobody wanted to open something that looked and smelled like it was decomposing from the inside out.

He remembered being told by his father the first time he'd been caught in the junkyard to avoid it, because older refrigerators like the ones down there had been known to trap children inside and either suffocate or starve them to death. That's probably why Patrick used this one.

He was about 12 years old when it happened. Patrick didn't really have friends at that time, sometimes he talked to Victor Criss or Steve Sadler, but besides that he had no one. Not that he minded, anyways. Victor had assigned seats beside him, and sometimes they'd joke about their old hag of a teacher, or Victor would help him with their history work. Steve (who had been given the nickname Moose) and Patrick sat sometimes with each other for lunch, rode the bus together when they still both went on it, and had two classes together. Patrick remembered thinking his nickname fit: Moose had dark chocolate colored eyes, curly, russet brown hair he never did anything with, freckles, tan skin, was a little slow, and he was tall for his age. Once or twice, they'd even snuck out of school to go walk around town, or sneak into alleyways to harass unsuspecting pigeons Patrick caught.

But this time, he was by himself.

He'd been screwing around with one of the stoves and a lighter he'd found, trying to see if he could get any of the rubbage inside of it to light. A screech from inside of one of the nearby fridges signaled him towards the line of abandoned models, and after a quick glance over them, he'd figured out which one it came from. When Patrick had opened it he'd been delighted.

A rat who must have gotten trapped inside was lying on its side and was panting heavily. It had weakly gotten up at the sight of the open door, and didn't even hiss or back away from Patrick as it tried to limp out. Patrick had watched it in awe as it almost fell out, before he grabbed it. The small rodent clawed and bit at his hands in

protest, but he was too fascinated to pay it mind.

Instead, Patrick wrapped his hands around its throat and twisted. The rat's head immediately lolled to its side and its eyes darkened. Patrick didn't care, but the way it's neck cracked when he twisted sent strange bursts of arousal down his body. The next day, he looked around all afternoon for a weak animal to lock inside.
It had been three, almost four years since then, and Patrick still continued this act: locking small or helpless animals or even pets inside, checking on them daily until they reached a breaking point, and then finally snapping their necks. He even removed the trays inside to make room for the boxes of animals he'd bring, and had a space in the bottom for interesting animal parts he'd keep. This was his only escape from rules that obstructed his life. He had friends now, and he knew that they couldn't find out. But that was half the pleasure he'd guessed, the rush of knowing he might get caught.

Now that it was actually a threat, he didn't feel a rush, he felt the tiniest bit of what was most likely fear.
Patrick stared at it now, taking in every detail like it might be his final time seeing it.
With no hesitation, he threw open the freezer's door. His eyes expected to fall over one of his newer victims, a pigeon he'd caught outside of the Aladdin theater something over four nights ago.

Instead he found its skeleton.

The bones were almost clean save for a strange black slug that was finishing off a section of the wing. The bones were greying and bloody, save for random patches of feathers that remained attached.

A quick examination of the inside confirmed that their were more of these slug-things. Small, and dark, and slimy, and winged. Dozens of them clung to the walls and roof of the freezer. The single one that lay devouring the pigeon had finished leaving only a mangled foot with talons, and now made a gurgling noise.

Before he could even question it, the small insect reared up, and

hissed at him, revealing a mouth full of rings of hundreds of small sharp teeth.
Patrick's stomach immediately churned at the site. He knew what this was. Leeches. Possibly the only thing that had ever scared him in his entire 15 years of living.
When he was 9, him and his father had gone swimming, his mother being too 'sick', to accompany them. His father told him she was always 'sick', and had been like this since Avery's death. Patrick agreed. They'd been swimming, and before they left Patrick found four of the small parasites attached to his legs and arms. He had screamed and sobbed, and cried until his father pulled them off and cleaned the wounds. Patrick could see them, draining him, blood pumping through their small contracting bodies as they slowly began killing him.

Now was just the same, and it was still just as terrifying as the leech's wings started vibrating.

Before he could even register what was happening, it flew out at him, and latched it's fangs into the flesh of his arm. Patrick cried out and jumped back.
He tried and pulled at it's slick body, wanting to retch at the site of its small form constricting and stretching as it sucked on him. He finally managed to pull it off, but when he did it curled inwards, fat from his blood, and seemed to explode.
His own blood coated his face and torso in small droplets and he could only blink and stare at the drying blood, and dime-sized whole left on his forearm that stung with each pulse.

The teen glanced up at the sound of multiple hisses, and was met with the sight of dozens of leeches, now all screeching out in chorus at the smell of blood.
Patrick's heart clenched.

A second later they were all on him, sucking and gnawing at his flesh. He fell back, landing painfully on his rear.
Patrick screamed again, from pain and shock but was shut up by one of the small leeches slithering into his mouth. He went to cough it out, but his throat contracting helped it go further down. He

struggled and silently cried as it latched onto an area near his inner cheek, and began draining him. He felt it widen, and before long, it too exploded and filled his mouth with his own blood, he half-vomited at the feeling of his own hot blood and insect wings going down his throat.

His whole body was covered with the small convulsing insects, all latching onto him. He slapped at them and pulled but each time they'd explode or dig in harder.
A rather large one now latched onto his face, piercing through millimeters from his tear duct. He felt something snap, and then his vision in his left eye blanked.
Patrick yanked it off in succession, gasping at the sharp pain it released. He cried out once more, swatting again and again at the insects, but he was getting tired. He felt himself grow weaker, and his body felt cold. He struggled to keep his eye open the other having gone black. Even his screams were getting quieter.

In a last attempt at escape he rolled onto his side, and attempted to drag himself away. His hands clawed through the dirt uselessly, and his nails cracked under the pressure. A clothed hand grasped at his ankle and he felt himself begin to be pulled away.

He didn't even get a chance to look, before it suddenly disappeared and was dropping him. The sound of footsteps nearing and then stopping a few feet away was brought to his attention. Looking up, he saw him.

Richie.

Richie had been feeling around on the junkyard's ground when he heard the scream. It was loud, and sent chills down his spine, but when he looked around and waited for a few moments, everything

was silent again.

He finally found his glasses, and to his dismay they sported a small spider-web of cracks in one corner and we're coated in dust.

Richie licked his palm, something Eddie would have been repulsed by, and swiped both lenses. He was careful not to to press hard in the cracks, the last thing he needed was for them to shatter and cut him.

Groaning, he put them on, and was thankful that he could at least see now. He managed to his feet, but another scream sounded out, even louder this time. And then another. Richie recognized Patrick's voice.
He stopped himself, staring at the direction it came from. Never once in his life had he heard Patrick scream, or cry, or show any sign of being human really.

But these screams were bloodcurdling and fear-induced. Richie of all people could identify these.
Every nerve in his body shouted at him to stop, but Richie couldn't help but edge closer, and follow the sounds which had now grown into broken sobs.
He rounded the corner of a trash-heap, before dashing out behind another. He slowly rounded it, careful to remain quiet. For all he knew Henry had come back and him and Patrick were brawling. He didn't doubt it, and knew if he were caught he'd be the new center of attention in their battle.
These screams didn't sound like ones you'd hear in a fight, and this was confirmed when Richie finally glimpsed at the source of the screams.

He couldn't believe his eyes.

Patrick lie on his side and was covered in a murder of small black bugs....or worms? He was too far away to tell. He had no trouble seeing that Patrick was covered in blood, and was clawing at the ground in terror however.
He watched dumbfounded, as the small bugs squirmed over Patrick's racked form, who was blinking and crying out in desperation. Suddenly, his body was yanked back, out of view.

Richie immediately followed it, despite his sore body's protests. When he came into full view of the junkyard's corner, he saw Patrick's legs suddenly drop. He looked around, but nobody else was there.

With hesitation Richie slowly stepped closer, before breaking into a slow-sprint and stopping abruptly as he neared Patrick's shaking body.
Patrick's tiring, fear-struck, clear-sea colored eyes met him, and seemed to be the only light in this bloody mess. Richie stopped when his eyes met the other teens and he hesitated again.
After another throaty sob, Richie returned to reality, and dropped down, and suddenly began trying to pull off the small insects- winged leeches he later confirmed.
His weaker arms had trouble pulling them off, but whenever he did, he threw him over his head, and every time they released small hisses as he unhooked them from Patrick's skin.

He struggled desperately, hating the coughs and choked-sobs Patrick emitted every time one was removed.
A few minutes in they all suddenly fell off, turning darker and curling up. Before Richie could question it they began exploding one by one, releasing buckets of blood. Richie gagged as he was coated in the red-hot liquid and fell backward at the release.

His glasses were splattered with it, and Richie had to wipe them to be able to see again.

Before long they were all gone, or so he thought. The brunette's arm stung suddenly, making him realize one was still latched firmly to his upper arm. In fear, Richie grasped its long body and ripped Its suckers out of his arm. He threw it to the dirt and stomped the small insect multiple time, grinding its body fat into the soil. When he lifted his leg it was gone, and in its place blood, which dropped from his shoe in thick ropes.

Wincing, he prodded at his arm. A small circular hole was left in the leech's place, and he could see clearly where it's fans had dug in. The wound oozed lukewarm blood, making Richie question who it

belonged to.

Richie turned his attention back to Patrick, whose eyes- well eye- struggled to stay open as he breathed out in ragged, soft breaths. If he hadn't been so close, Richie would have thought he was already dead.

"Jesus fuck, Patrick. What the hell happened?"

Richie was scared, terrified even. His voice cracked with the force of the words and he breathed out with uncertainty.
He didn't expect him to be able to answer, but before he could, the sound of a refridgerator door slamming grabbed both of their attention.
That must be the refrigerator Henry was talking about earlier...

A large clothed hand reached out from behind the old Frigidaire and grasped the side. Large dark claws ripped out of the fingertips suddenly, and tore through the light-colored gloves. The hand slowly drew back, scratching the machine and making a sound similar to that of nails on a chalkboard. Fresh blood wiped from the glove onto the side of it, staining the pale exterior.

Patrick began screaming again.

Richie began darting away as fast as his sore legs allowed him, stopping halfway when he remembered Patrick was still back there.

He turned around and saw the older boy still lying on his side, eye still quivering and body shaking. He was covered in his own drying blood, and small circular wounds littered his body. Richie gulped. He couldn't leave him, as much as he didn't want to. Patrick was a creep..... a crazy, perverted, psychopathic, creep, but he was still a person, right?

Richie considered this before he turned back and wrapped his arms around Patrick's torso. He pulled him up, and to the best of his ability, leaned him over Richie's own body. He draped one of

Patrick's arms over his back and grabbed it with one hand, and pulled Patrick in with his other arm, holding him tight and hoisting him up slightly.
It was extremely difficult; Richie was 5'5 and something around 120 pounds, probably even less. Patrick had cleared six foot when he was 13, and two years later he was still a few inches taller than that. He certainly weighed more than Richie, if height didn't prove anything. Richie was a beanpole, and while Patrick wasn't muscular and was even chubby in some areas, he wasn't even close to Richie's level of skinny.

The boy finally adjusted himself to have a balanced amount of Patrick leaning over him, and helped support him as he limped towards the woods as fast as he could.

His mind was set on one thing; getting the hell out of there and getting Patrick somewhere safe, preferably away from him.

Notes for the Chapter:

> Quick thank you to everybody reading! The amount of support I got is so overwhelming and heart-warming. I didn't expect this to get so popular, but it did so I'm really happy.
> Anyways, see you guys next Thursday or Friday